

October 2022 Edition



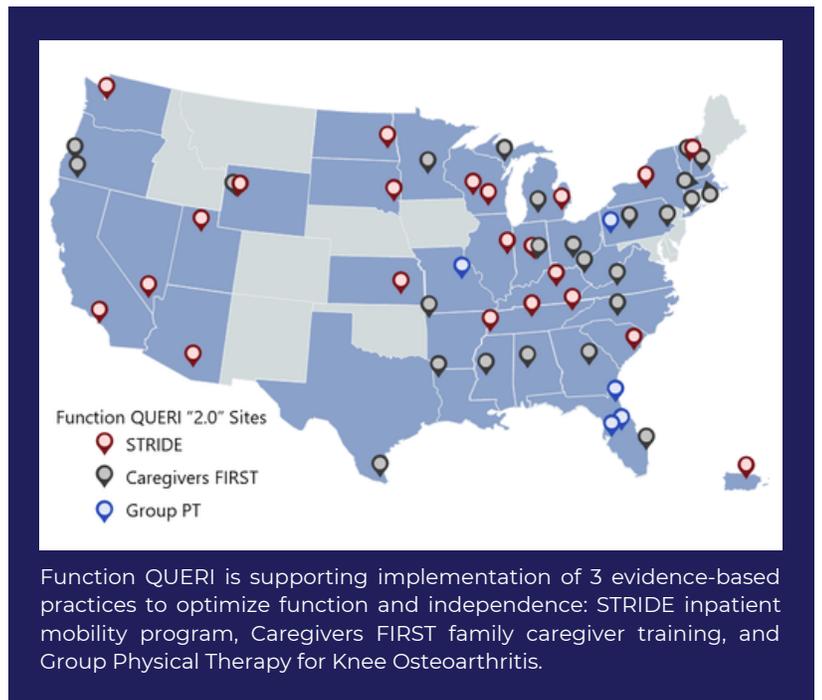
Function QUERI

Optimizing Function and Independence
Quality Enhancement Research Initiative

Spreading Programs Nationally

Function QUERI's overall impact goal is to implement and evaluate effective practices to maximize function and independence in Veterans. To achieve this goal, spread of our evidence-based practices is in full swing! In FY22, Function QUERI:

- Helped launch our evidence-based programs at 39 unique VA medical centers.
- Provided implementation support and training to 260 VA clinical staff



In this Issue

Pg. 2

Group PT celebrates National Physical Therapy Month and Pittsburgh leading their first class

Pg. 3

STRIDE Lessons Learned to date and Welcome to our last cohort of Function QUERI participants

Pg.4

Caregivers FIRST represented during national conference and shares results with clinical partners

Pg.5

Noteworthy publications and presentations plus information for enrolling in Function QUERI programs

October is National Physical Therapy Month!

"National Physical Therapy Month is an opportunity every year to take time to recognize the outstanding impact physical therapists and physical therapist assistants have on society and health care," said American Physical Therapy Association President Roger Herr, PT, MPA.

The theme this year is "Choose to Move," which emphasizes physical therapists' unique value as movement experts and the benefits of regular physical activity.



The Function QUERI team in Durham would like to send a special thank you to all the PTs and PTAs that are enrolled in our first cohort!

Pittsburgh leads first Group PT class!

Pittsburgh, PA is enrolled in our first cohort that launched in June 2022 and they recently held their first Group PT class! "We were interested in starting a virtual knee OA group in order to reach more veterans and reduce their travel stress," said Christine Fiori, the PT leading the class. They have 3 Veterans with knee osteoarthritis participating in virtual classes. "They all improved in their sit-to-stand score in just one week!", Fiori said about the enrolled Veterans.

Having a smaller class to begin their Group PT program has allowed Pittsburgh to identify parts of the class they like and some things they plan to change for their next group of Veterans.

Congratulations to the Pittsburgh team - keep up the great work!

"We were interested in starting a virtual knee OA group in order to reach more veterans and reduce their travel stress."

**-Christine Fiori, Physical Therapist
at Pittsburgh VAMC**



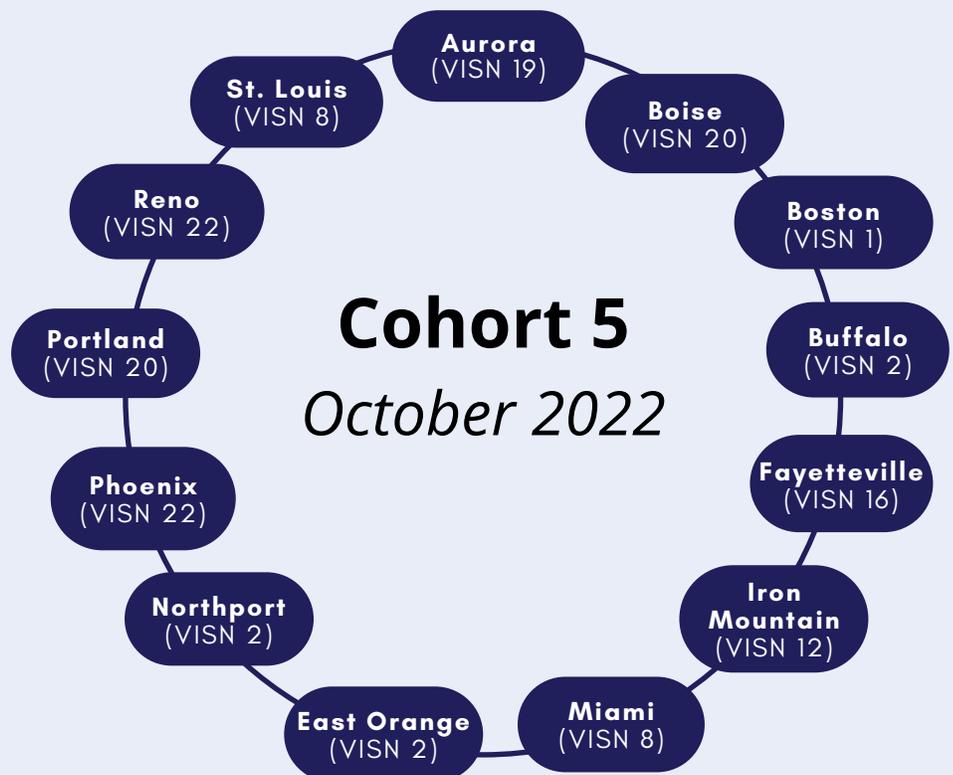
Interested in implementing Group PT at your site? Contact Caitlin Sullivan, Implementation Specialist, at Caitlin.Sullivan2@va.gov.

Lessons Learned from STRIDE To Date

- ✦ It is critical to think through **scalable implementation strategies** to accommodate adoption of clinical programs in vastly differing clinical environments. [Click here](#) to learn more
- ✦ Team-building interventions like CONNECT can be **modified to fit** diverse clinical environments and contexts. [Click here](#) to learn more
- ✦ Studies evaluating clinical program implementation using a stepped-wedge cluster randomized trial design should **1) ensure** ample time for site recruitment and **2) consider** the amount of implementation support and "ramp up" time teams might need to successfully get the program off the ground. [Click here](#) to learn more
- ✦ It is necessary to allow for **flexibility in staff roles** and encourage staff to **self-organize** when implementing new clinical programs. [Click here](#) to learn more
- ✦ There are ways to modify STRIDE program activities to accommodate logistical constraints during required isolation using **self-guided exercise activity kits** like STRIDE in Your Room. [Click here](#) to learn more

Welcome, New STRIDE Teams!

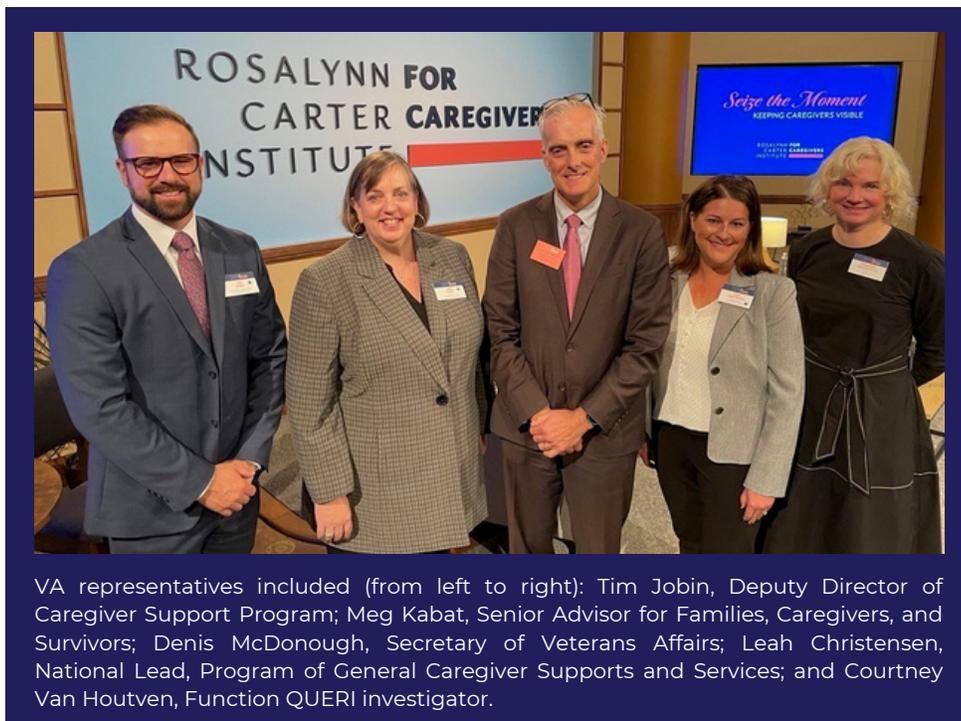
The Function QUERI team has welcomed 13 new STRIDE teams to the STRIDE family! These sites span multiple VISNs, complexity levels, and staffing models, but all have a uniform goal - to offer a hospital walking program to their Veterans! Cohort 5 sites launched at the beginning of **October** and will continue to work with the Function QUERI team for **10 months** on their implementation journeys.



Are you interested in bringing a STRIDE program to your facility? We have closed enrollment for participation in Function QUERI, but we do offer our resources to hospitals interested in a self-guided implementation. Reach out to **Ashley Choate** at ashley.choate@va.gov with questions or to request access to our SharePoint and documentation templates.

Caregivers FIRST Updates

Courtney Van Houtven represented Function QUERI October 10-12 at the **Rosalyn Carter Institute 2022** convening in Atlanta, where a variety of organizations, leaders, and caregiver advocates discussed the future of family caregiver support.



VA representatives included (from left to right): Tim Jobin, Deputy Director of Caregiver Support Program; Meg Kabat, Senior Advisor for Families, Caregivers, and Survivors; Denis McDonough, Secretary of Veterans Affairs; Leah Christensen, National Lead, Program of General Caregiver Supports and Services; and Courtney Van Houtven, Function QUERI investigator.

How Caregivers Value Program

Sharing Results with Clinical Partners

Embedded within a learning health system, part of Function QUERI's mission is to rapidly translate research findings to operational partners. During the September quarterly Diffusion Network call, **Nina Sperber**, **Courtney Van Houtven**, and **Kasey Decosimo** presented to 129 Caregiver Support Program field staff on how we used evaluations and qualitative interviews to understand the value of Caregivers FIRST for caregiver participants and shared lessons learned.

- Overall, 86% of caregiver survey respondents expressed satisfaction with the classes.
- Of caregivers interviewed, caregivers valued support from class facilitators as well as connection with other caregivers.
- When caregivers talked about their appreciation of the training facilitators, many mentioned their “accessibility,” being available to help troubleshoot and answer questions with a phone call or in-person chat.

- Site staff administered feedback evaluations to caregivers at the completion of series (n=124)
- Assessed satisfaction and perceived utility

Survey



- Function QUERI contacted caregivers for a short phone interview if they participated in at least 2 of the 4 core classes (n=41)
- Assessed overall value of training to caregivers

Interview



Caregiver Support Program field staff can view the presentation recording [here](#).

Noteworthy Pubs & Presentations

As more healthcare systems spread evidence-based practices, identifying scalable and effective strategies is critical. Function QUERI investigators **Jaime Hughes** and **Leah Zullig** describe our multi-level, multi-step process to evaluate implementation intensification with the 3 Function QUERI programs. This work was recently published in *The Gerontologist*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnac130>

Implementation intensification development process:



INTERESTED IN ENROLLING ?

- Group PT - group physical therapy for knee OA program
 - Enrolling NOW for winter 2022!
 - Contact Caitlin.Sullivan2@va.gov

WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR PROGRAMS?

- STRIDE: <https://marketplace.va.gov/practices/the-stride-program>
- Caregivers FIRST: <https://marketplace.va.gov/practices/caregivers-first>
- Group PT: <https://marketplace.va.gov/practices/group-physical-therapy-for-knee-oa>

FOLLOW US!

Twitter: [@DurhamADAPT](https://twitter.com/DurhamADAPT)

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/durham-adapt

Web: <https://durham.hsr.d.research.va.gov>